

Chapter 7

Magic in Medieval Byzantium

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In Byzantium, magic was consistently categorized as a body of non-Christian knowledge and practices, which in turn was often associated with pre-Christian, pagan traditions. As a consequence, modern scholarship often recounts the history of magic in Byzantium in conjunction with the history of Christianization and the gradual abandonment of pagan culture. Scholarship on Byzantine magic is therefore significantly more abundant regarding the early Byzantine period (ca. 320–726), the era when the Empire's transition from a predominantly pagan society to a predominantly Christian one transpired. In recent decades, attention has begun to turn toward the study of magic in the middle Byzantine era (ca. 843–1204), that is to say, the epoch after Iconoclasm (ca. 726–843).¹ Still, the topic of magic cannot be said to have established itself in the mainstream of Byzantine historiography, a point illustrated by the fact that none of the three large-scale handbooks for Byzantine studies published between 2008 and 2010 includes an essay devoted specifically to the topic of magic or the occult.²

Other essays in this volume discuss magic in the Late Antique world, a period when the Roman-Byzantine Empire still encompassed both the East and West. The current chapter focuses instead on attitudes toward and practices of magic in the middle Byzantine era, by which time the Eastern Roman Empire had emerged as a geographic and cultural entity separate from Western medieval Europe. The chapter first evaluates the definition of magic in the civil and canon law of the middle Byzantine period, as well as that of related terminology in other textual genres, such as historical chronicles. Issues of gender in middle Byzantine conceptions of magic are addressed, including the particular roles that women were understood to play as practitioners and victims of occult and demonic activities. Attention then turns to a deeper exploration of learned magic in medieval Byzantium, especially its content and forms of transmission. Finally, the late and post-Byzantine magical traditions that have roots in the middle Byzantine era are briefly mentioned, and the

particular continuities with medieval Byzantine magic that they maintained are noted. Throughout this chapter, written sources are considered in tandem with the visual and material evidence of Byzantine magic: artifacts not only complement but also augment the available record, shedding light on aspects of Byzantine magic that are unattested in written documentation.³

Defining “Magic” in Medieval Byzantium: Texts, Images, Objects

As in the West, church authorities played a significant part not only in the social approval and rejection of magic but also in the very definition of what magic was. The specific natures of different magical endeavors varied greatly from one another, and judgment regarding whether a particular activity was acceptable to Christian Orthodoxy could change over time. A consistent defining element for occult practices across the middle Byzantine period was the belief that such endeavors involved the marshaling of supernatural powers outside of ecclesiastical authority and rituals. Extra-institutional and extra-liturgical activities and devices might employ Christian imagery and language, but they did so in a manner not sanctioned by the church. Occult traditions can also be distinguished in relation to class, with individuals of lower social echelons typically being associated with what might be labeled as superstitious activities transmitted through popular practice and oral tradition, whereas educated people engaged in the exploration of more esoteric, book-based occult knowledge. Such distinctions were by no means absolute, however, as indicated by certain practices (for example, the use of amulets) and beliefs (in, for example, the supernatural power of antique statues) that are evident across the social spectrum of medieval Byzantium.

References to occult practices and practitioners are found in a wide range of written sources, including law codes, historical accounts, homilies, and saints’ lives. Middle Byzantine legislation provides definitions of unsanctioned activities, and these sources offer useful guidelines for understanding the position of the Byzantine State and the Orthodox Church regarding what constituted magic.⁴ Although middle Byzantine civil law generally reiterates the regulations articulated in early Byzantine imperial codes, a noteworthy shift occurred with the promulgation of Novel 65 under Emperor Leo VI (r. 886–912), which terminated the long-standing toleration of benign magic (such as spells and amulets intended to aid a harvest or cure an illness).⁵ In the post-Iconoclastic era, only the power of Christ and his saints could be marshaled against threats or beseeched for assistance, and their aid

was secured by means of objects, language, and rituals authorized by the church. Magic was judged to be inherently evil, regardless of the practitioner's intentions, and those who participated in it were, technically speaking, apostates.

Although individual types of magic are not precisely defined in the middle Byzantine civil codes, canon law of the era is more specific. An important source for middle Byzantine ecclesiastical definitions of magic is the commentary begun in the 1170s by the scholar Theodore Balsamon (d. ca. 1195), which discussed the rulings on magic found in Canon 61 of the famous late seventh-century ecclesiastical synod, the so-called Council in Trullo (691/692). Balsamon cites a variety of occult practices and the individuals who participated in them, thereby clarifying the kinds of activities that were denounced by the church. He definitively condemns astrology and astronomy, judging the two to be one and the same. This position is of interest because Balsamon's prominent forerunner, the canonist John Zonaras (d. ca. 1159), had distinguished between the two types of knowledge, condoning astronomy as a legitimate academic field of inquiry.⁶ Balsamon was writing, however, in the wake of a campaign spearheaded by the Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–1180) to defend the orthodoxy of astrology, and Balsamon's definitive rejection of both domains of knowledge can be read as an uncompromising response to the emperor's efforts.⁷

Other practitioners of magic censured by Balsamon included: diviners (μάντις), both those who observed the natural world in order to prognosticate (e.g., palm readers and augurs) and those who used tools to reveal hidden information (e.g., lecanomancers, who performed divination by means of interpreting the surface of liquid contained within a vessel); the so-called *hekantontarchos* (ἑκατόνταρχος), an ambiguous category of magicians who deceived and manipulated ordinary people by means of their cunning; amulet peddlers; snake charmers; *engastrimythoi* (ἐγγαστρίμυθοι, literally “belly-talkers”), a type of false prophet who claimed to deliver oracles while feigning demonic possession; and so-called *ghitevtai* (γητεῦται), people, especially priests and monks, who distorted Orthodox religion by invoking the names of Christian holy people in their incantations and purveying sacred objects and images to be used as amulets or in divinatory rituals.⁸ This last group no doubt raised particular concern for the church because the *ghitevtai* employed Christian terms, emblems, and objects in their machinations, thereby blurring the line between Orthodox and unorthodox practices and potentially confusing the ignorant, who might easily mistake these rituals and devices as legitimate.⁹

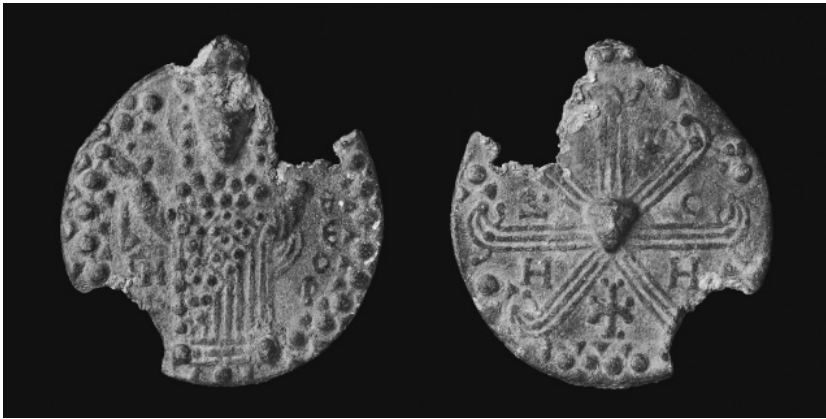


FIGURE 7.1. Amulet depicting Saint Theophano (obv) and the Wandering Womb (rev), middle Byzantine, 900–1200, lead, diam. 3.2 cm. Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, bequest of Thomas Whittemore, 1951.31.4.1869. Photo: Katya Kallsen. © President and Fellows of Harvard College.

Material evidence for the combination of Christian and magical imagery is found in a sizable corpus of middle Byzantine amulets.¹⁰ The group includes objects in a variety of media, such as enamel, bronze, and semi-precious stone. Most of these charms were intended to provide medical assistance. They frequently depict the so-called wandering womb (a motif that visualizes the inflicted body part that the amulet was intended to cure) or the Chnoubis (a pre-Christian apotropaic emblem in the shape of a lion-headed serpent), both of which are often presented in tandem with portraits of the Virgin Mary, a saint (Figure 7.1), or a narrative scene from the New Testament. These talismanic objects share many features with early Byzantine magical devices and therefore point to either the revival or survival in the middle Byzantine era of Late Antique magical techniques, especially those of a medical nature.¹¹ Based on the high quality and relatively valuable substances of these amulets, Jeffrey Spier suggests that they were used by the middle Byzantine elite. An apparent tenth-century surge in their production may reflect a renewed scholarly interest in occult treatises around that time.¹²

As regards the penalties for unorthodox activities, middle Byzantine historical accounts report the prosecution of prominent individuals found guilty of malicious magic, particularly spells or other machinations against emperors or their close associates. Civil authorities exercised jurisdiction over individuals who committed serious crimes by occult means; they could (and did) issue punishments as severe as blinding, banishment, or even execution. For

instance, the monk Theodore Santabarenos (d. ca. 919) was reported to have used magic to gain the favor of the Emperor Basil I (r. 867–886) and to turn him against his son and heir, Leo, who had denounced Theodore as a sorcerer. Theodore's schemes were eventually exposed, and after being found guilty at trial, he was flogged, exiled, and later blinded.¹³ In the 1160s, the Emperor Manuel I commanded that the courtiers Skleros Seth and Michael Sikidites be blinded with hot irons as punishment for their use of malicious magic: in the former case, to seduce a young virgin and, in the latter case, to conjure deceptive, destructive visions that attacked and tormented his victims.¹⁴ In these high-profile examples, however, it must be noted that the condemned individuals were involved not only in magic but also in court intrigue, including treason, and the severity of their sentences reflected the seriousness of these political crimes.

Ecclesiastical authorities dealt with the lesser transgressions of common people. Balsamon instructs that the rulings against those found guilty of magic should be determined in relation to the degree of their intentionality and malice. Those who performed or sought magical intervention could be punished with six years of excommunication, and clerics might be defrocked, but ecclesiastical judgments tended to be more clement in instances of mild violations. Indeed, the naïve, the simpleminded, and the repentant could reasonably hope for more relaxed sentences. This conciliatory attitude was not apparent in the earliest Byzantine civil codes of the fourth century, which roundly condemned practitioners of any form of occult activity and equated their actions with the capital offenses of murder and treason.¹⁵ This strident attitude initially shaped earlier canon law as well, but church authorities rapidly made finer distinctions among magical acts, and already in the later fourth century, they had begun to differentiate between categories of magical practice that fell, for example, alongside the serious but more redeemable transgressions of apostasy and heresy.¹⁶ Balsamon affirmed this position by recommending forbearance toward individuals whose social background or level of education rendered them ill-equipped to identify practitioners of the occult or to reject their aid.¹⁷ This dispensation was justified on the grounds that some sorcerers and amulet purveyors were themselves monks and priests, and the objects they proffered often employed Christian motifs and names. Balsamon reasoned that common people might be confused about the legitimacy of the services and products being purveyed.¹⁸

The concern to distinguish Orthodox religious practices from pagan and/or magical acts also affected the reintroduction of images into Christian devotion following Iconoclasm. Iconophile theologians set strict guidelines

for the depiction of holy people and the veneration of them through icons, an effort geared toward guaranteeing that the faithful did not inadvertently stray into idolatry when paying homage to Christ or the saints via their images. Post-Iconoclastic icons portrayed holy people according to established criteria that were designed to affiliate the depicted figure with a particular, unmistakable individual; labels identifying the saints by name furthered this effort and became an essential feature of Orthodox representation.¹⁹ This change reflected a new understanding about how icons worked: the post-Iconoclastic theology specified that images rendered in icons did not operate as independent, powerful objects; nor could the image's potency be magnified through repetition.²⁰ Rather, the post-Iconoclastic icon was qualified as impotent material, which served as a mere conduit for prayers to the holy person who was the prototype of the image and the source of its spiritual power.²¹ Aimed at preventing idolatry, these new criteria identified by exclusion a variety of other kinds of images and objects – such as amulets, repeating emblems that were thought to increase in power by means of their multiplication, and non-canonical portraits of holy people – that had been less controlled and less frequently condemned before Iconoclasm but that now were definitively relegated to a position outside of officially sanctioned Christian practices.

In Byzantine texts more broadly, the words commonly used in reference to the occult include *μαγεία* (magic), *μάγος* (magician), *φαρμακεία* (spells and/or potions), *γοητεία* (sorcery), and *γόης* (sorcerer).²² Terms such as these were often deployed in Iconophile rhetoric as a means to discredit religious and political enemies, especially Iconoclast authorities. For example, Iconophile sources affiliate the Iconoclast patriarch John the Grammarian (d. ca. 867) with sorcery and divination, a claim that may reflect his actual interest in branches of learning that the Orthodox Church considered heretical.²³ The condemnation of John is also apparent in the visual culture of post-Iconoclastic Byzantine. A marginal illustration in the ninth-century Khludov Psalter creates a typological parallel between John and Simon Magus, the Samaritan sorcerer who offended God by trying to buy from the apostles Peter and John the ability to channel the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:9–8:24) (Moscow, Hist. Mus., MS. 129. D, fol. 51v) (Figure 7.2). The manuscript illumination shows John the Grammarian trampled by his historical opponent, the Iconophile Patriarch Nikephoros I (d. 828), while Simon Magus writhes under the foot of St. Peter. Much as Peter revealed Simon to be an enemy of God and a sinner, Nikephoros is credited with exposing the false teachings and spiritual corruption of John the Grammarian and his Iconoclast cohort.



FIGURE 7.2. Patriarch Nikephoros I trampling John the Grammarian and the Apostle Peter trampling Simon Magus, Khludov Psalter, middle Byzantine, mid-ninth century, pigment on vellum, 19.5 × 15 cm. Hist. Mus., Moscow, MS. D.129, fol. 51v. © State Historical Museum, Moscow.

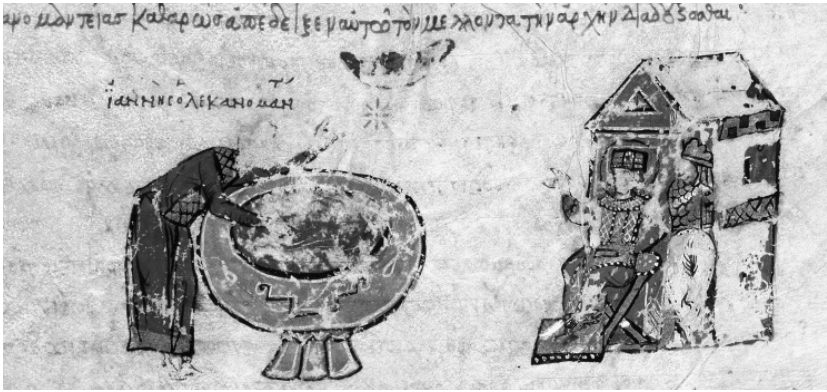


FIGURE 7.3. John the Grammarian performing lecanomancy, *History of John Skylitzes*, Norman-Byzantine, twelfth century, Sicily, pigment on vellum, 35.5 × 27 cm. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid, vitr. 26–2, fol. 58r. © Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.

The late eleventh-century chronicle of the Byzantine historian John Skylitzes is one of several middle Byzantine accounts that refer to John the Grammarian as a sorcerer and accuse him of honing abilities in various occult techniques, including lecanomancy, heptoscopy (reading the omens in animal livers), *stoicheiosis* (manipulating statues to influence fortune and bring about desired results), and necromancy (conjuring the dead).²⁴ An illustrated twelfth-century manuscript of Skylitzes's chronicle, thought to have been produced in Norman Sicily, depicts John the Grammarian exercising his unorthodox skills. In one scene, he is labeled as a lecanomancer and shown leaning over a large bowl as he divines the name of the successor to the Iconoclast Emperor Theophilos (r. 829–842). With one hand, John stirs the waters in the vessel and with the other, he points to a star in the heavens. Theophilos sits enthroned to the right and observes intently the lecanomantic ritual (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, vitr. 26–2, fol. 58r) (Figure 7.3).²⁵

Numerous references to lecanomancy in middle Byzantine texts suggest that it was a prevalent divinatory practice. The tools used in medieval magic are rarely preserved, but a middle Byzantine glass bowl, now outfitted as a chalice and held in the treasury of the Church of San Marco in Venice, may have served in lecanomantic rituals.²⁶ It shows around the exterior wall seven medallions framing classicizing figures, several of whom are related to divination, including an augur, the Greco-Roman god Mercury, and Odysseus



FIGURE 7.4. San Marco bowl, middle Byzantine, eleventh or twelfth century, enameled and gilded glass, h. 17 cm, diam. 17 cm (with handles, 33 cm). Treasury of San Marco, Venice. Per gentile concessione della Procuratoria di San Marco, Venezia, Italia.



FIGURE 7.5. Detail of pseudo-inscription, San Marco bowl. Per gentile concessione della Procuratoria di San Marco, Venezia, Italia.

(Figure 7.4). Around the base and rim of the vessel (Figure 7.5) are inscribed pseudo-Arabic bands (combinations of letter-like forms that resemble Arabic but that do not form consistently legible letters or words). In the middle Byzantine period, magic in general and divination in particular were understood to have grown from both Greco-Roman and ancient Near Eastern roots. Medieval Islamic cultures were often referred to by the names of their purported ancestors (such as the Chaldeans or the Egyptians), a convention that

may have led to associating magical expertise with contemporary Muslims and that was certainly affirmed by the expertise in astrology and other divinatory arts that medieval Islamic groups had developed during the tenth and subsequent centuries.²⁷ The combination of classicizing iconography and Islamicizing script on the San Marco bowl may therefore reflect an understanding of both ancient and foreign cultures as potent sources of divinatory knowledge.²⁸ Together the imagery and “inscriptions” on the object would have empowered it for use in supernatural rituals.

Various additional forms of magic are mentioned in other middle Byzantine historical accounts. These references are often to types of divination, a trend that may be due to the importance that prognostication played in Byzantine politics, which was a topic of greatest interest to most chroniclers.²⁹ The early thirteenth-century account by Niketas Choniates, for example, records several cases of individuals performing supernatural acts at the request of emperors who sought to gain information about the future, including a (false) seer, Basilakes, whose followers interpreted his enigmatic utterances as prophecies, and a sorcerer, Skleros Seth, who had been trained since childhood as a lecanomancer.³⁰ These and other illicit activities mentioned by Byzantine historians closely parallel the occult practices condemned by Balsamon, a correlation that suggests the vitality and pervasiveness of these unorthodox pursuits at all levels of medieval Byzantine society. Indeed, a tenth-century text that provides instructions on how to prepare for an imperial expedition specifies that manuals for the interpretation of dreams (βιβλίον τὸν Ὀνειροκρίτην) and “chances and occurrences” (βιβλίον Συναντηματικόν, presumably a book for interpreting omens) be included in the baggage taken on campaign, a recommendation that is made without any indication that the use of such books would be controversial.³¹ Other types of prognostication attested in the middle Byzantine period include chremetismomancy (the interpretation of horses’ neighs) and palomancy (divination based on the inadvertent twitching of an individual’s body).³²

Accusations of magical transgressions were not only leveled at prominent Iconoclasts but were also used as a form of political calumny more generally. For example, the courtier Alexios Axouch, who had served faithfully under the Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, was falsely accused of sorcery by enemies in the twelfth century (ca. 1167).³³ These allegations may have gained traction because Axouch was of Seljuq origin. His “Persian” background could have encouraged prejudices that associated occult learning and practices with foreigners, especially Muslims. In some cases, such as that of Axouch, the denunciation of a high-ranking courtier as a sorcerer can be dismissed as a

form of political invective that was unrelated to “real” magic. Yet in other instances, these indictments remain consistent with a broader definition of magic as any act that exercises power or promotes beliefs that reside outside of Christian Orthodoxy. Such actions and ideas could include heresies like Iconoclasm, which were believed by some Byzantine commentators to operate in an “unofficial” domain and to have been inspired by Satan or his demons.³⁴

Another important textual source for middle Byzantine conceptions of magic is saints’ lives, in which the supernatural machinations and moral weakness of sorcerers and their clients are sharply contrasted with the virtue and spiritual strength of Christian holy people and their followers.³⁵ These stories often recount how a naïve person engages a magician to help solve a persistent problem, not realizing that this relationship will ensnare him or her in evil forces. After suffering the assaults of demons, the individual seeks the aid of a holy person to escape these supernatural tormentors. Following further anguish, the petitioner and the saint successfully repulse the demons, and the Christian repents for having failed in his or her vigilance against the deceptions of Satan. The moral of these stories typically affirms that prayers directed to Christian holy people are the only means of gaining legitimate supernatural assistance. In some accounts, magicians are so impressed by the superior power of Christ that they convert to Christianity.

An intriguing middle Byzantine visual depiction of occult practice and the besting of demonic forces through Christian faith is found in a ninth-century (ca. 879–883) manuscript recording the homilies of the late fourth-century Bishop (and later Saint) Gregory of Nazianzus. One illustration depicts a scene from the life of the early Christian saint Cyprian, who had been a sorcerer prior to his conversion. In the upper register, Cyprian is portrayed in the clothing of an ancient philosopher (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. Gr. 510, fol. 332v) (Figure 7.6). This iconography no doubt reflects the belief, established in early Byzantine sources, that pagan philosophers were practitioners of the occult.³⁶ He is surrounded by magical devices, including a globe (used for astrological projections), a pagan cult statue (which was believed to be inhabited by demons), and a large bowl (in which stand two miniature figures that likely represent the effigies used in love spells).³⁷ According to his vita, Cyprian attempted to seduce the Christian virgin, Justina, through demonic influence. His advances were thwarted, however, by Justina’s prayers to Christ, an event conveyed in visual terms by the black-figured demon (mostly effaced) who flies back to Cyprian after being repulsed.³⁸ Inspired by the efficacy of Christ’s



FIGURE 7.6. Scenes from the life of Saint Cyprian, *Homilies* of Gregory of Nazianus, middle Byzantine, ca. 879–883, pigment on vellum. Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, ms. Gr. 510, fol. 332v. © Bibliothèque nationale de France.

intervention, Cyprian converted to Christianity. His baptism is depicted in the lower register; beside him, a pile of tablets representing his occult knowledge has been cast to the flames. Cyprian was a victim of the infamous late third-century persecutions of Christians during the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian (r. 284–305). The images represent, therefore, a middle Byzantine conception of a Late Roman pagan sorcerer and the tools of his trade, as well as the power of Christ and his devotees to triumph over the dark arts of the occult.

Women and Magic in Byzantium

Although “witches” in the Western sense (i.e., women who form pacts with Satan and perform rites of demonic worship) never comprised a significant category in the history of Byzantine magic, there were gendered notions of how demons and humans interacted.³⁹ A common topos in saints’ lives is the woman possessed by, unwittingly in league with, or desired as the object of demonic forces. Women are also commonly characterized by hypersexual desires, either being consumed by such temptations themselves (often as the result of a spell cast against them) or ensnaring others with the unnatural intensity of their own physical allure.⁴⁰ In cataloging John the Grammarian’s travesties, for instance, Skylitzes recounts that John lured nuns to an underground workshop, where he consorted with them indecently and manipulated them to collaborate in his sorcery.⁴¹ We might understand these stories as exposing a societal anxiety surrounding the control of female bodies, as well as the affirmation of a belief in the spiritual vulnerability of women, who were thought to be too naïve to recognize and too weak to resist the magician’s or demon’s deceptions.

Women also appear as the practitioners of magic, often in the form of the drunken old woman who peddles false prophecies or who manufactures illicit amulets.⁴² In this respect, the middle Byzantine era saw the continuation of a Late Antique topos that tagged marginal women as the agents of unorthodox supernatural actions.⁴³ In a few instances, specific women of high social status were associated with the occult, but usually they thwarted Byzantine expectations for female behavior in other ways as well, and their magical activities can be understood as a subset of a broader range of traits that made them unconventional characters.

Perhaps the most prominent of such women to bear the taint of the occult was the Empress Zoe (d. 1050). In describing her reign, the historian Michael Psellos



FIGURE 7.7. Amulet depicting the Holy Rider attacking the demon Gyllou (obv) and magical signs (rev), Byzantine, tenth or eleventh century (?), from Asia Minor, silver, diam. 5 cm. Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, AN1980.53. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

(ca. 1018–1081) insinuated her involvement with two activities of questionable nature: she mixed unguents and perfumes in her chambers, which may be an allusion to the production of magical potions; and she prayed to an unusual icon of Christ that changed colors in response to the questions that she posed, a practice that can be interpreted as a form of prognostication and that represents a use of icons that was unconventional, if not unorthodox.⁴⁴ These allusions must be read, however, in relation to Psellos's broader attitude toward Zoe, which was not favorable. The suggestion of her involvement in occult practices may be, therefore, part of his larger effort to demonstrate her unfitness to rule.

A final domain of supernatural manipulation commonly ascribed to women in the Byzantine literature was medical magic, particularly that having to do with conception, birth, and gynecological disorders.⁴⁵ Many middle Byzantine amulets appear to have been designed to assist women, as indicated by their depiction of the wandering womb and/or the Holy Rider (an apotropaic figure who was believed to repel the infamous miscarriage-inducing, child-stealing demon Gyllou) (Figure 7.7).⁴⁶ Seeking unconventional means to combat medical conditions was a path not limited to women of lower social standing. At the urging of her husband, Romanos III (r. 1028–1034), the aforementioned Empress Zoe, who was significantly past childbearing age at the time of their marriage, hung charms and chains from her body that were intended to assist her in conception, an effort that Michael Psellos dismissed as futile nonsense.⁴⁷ We can speculate that midwives may have been particularly knowledgeable about medico-magical amulets, an expertise that would have been of obvious value, if not necessity, in their line of work.⁴⁸

Magic and Erudition: The “Occult Sciences” of Medieval Byzantium

In addition to popular magical practices and the objects associated with them, the middle Byzantine period also witnessed substantial interest among members of the Byzantine elite in the study of what modern scholars have termed the “occult sciences.” Maria Mavroudi and Paul Magdalino differentiate the occult sciences from magic more broadly based on former’s literate, sophisticated character, which required significant preparatory education on the part of those who attempted to master it.⁴⁹ Generally speaking, these erudite pursuits were decidedly outside of Orthodox Christian practice, but they could be defended as potentially acceptable domains of intellectual exploration. Learned people who perused occult texts were careful to emphasize that their interests remained purely theoretical and that they did not practice the methods in which these books instructed.⁵⁰ They justified their study of unorthodox wisdom as a way to combat un-Christian teachings or promoted this learning as a necessary part of their broader effort to understand and preserve ancient knowledge in all its forms.

The types of learning that can be classified within the occult sciences include astronomy and astrology, as well as dream interpretation, alchemy, the reading of omens, and the understanding of the sympathetic properties of natural materials, like stones. As articulated in the work of the middle Byzantine scholar of “pagan” learning Michael Psellos, who was mentioned in the previous section, all of these fields of study were understood to be related to ancient philosophy and specifically to theories of cosmic sympathy, which accounted for natural phenomena that were otherwise inexplicable.⁵¹ From the perspective of learned men like Psellos, such knowledge was fundamentally separate from the popular magic peddled by crazy old women and shifty charlatans on street corners and the unorthodox machinations employed by members of the imperial court.⁵² The occult sciences represented an erudite and exclusive body of wisdom that carried the authority of an ancient textual tradition inherited from the Greco-Roman and Near Eastern worlds.

This esoteric learning was also deeply imbricated with bodies of scientific knowledge that were of interest to other medieval cultures. In particular, the tenth century witnessed a massive effort on the part of the medieval Islamic Abbāsid Dynasty (750–1250) to obtain and translate into Arabic numerous manuscripts that preserved ancient scientific and philosophical knowledge. Medieval Byzantine scholars were very aware of the Islamic engagement with and accomplishments in a broad range of scientific fields. In some instances,

Byzantine intellectuals were in direct contact with foreign students and scholars from the Islamic world, particularly those with connections to the sophisticated courtly and intellectual communities of the Ummayyads in Spain (711–1031), the Fatimids in Egypt and Syria (909–1171), and the ‘Abbāsids in the Near East.⁵³ Arabic manuscripts on occult sciences were also translated into Greek, a phenomenon that is particularly well documented in the field of dream interpretation.⁵⁴

Western European connections with Byzantine magic are less evident in the surviving record, although they certainly existed. The Lombardian diplomat Liudprand of Cremona (d. ca. 972), who visited Constantinople at least twice in the tenth century as an emissary from the court of Otto I (r. 936–973), speaks of political prophecies circulating at the court that compelled Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963–969) to go on campaign against the Arabs. Liudprand reports that the Byzantines interpreted a prophecy that “[t]he lion and the cub together shall exterminate the wild donkey” to mean that Nikephoros (as the lion) and Otto (as the cub) would together defeat the Arabs (as the wild donkey). Liudprand disagrees with this reading, however, proposing instead that Otto was the triumphant lion, his heir was the cub, and the Byzantines were the donkey.⁵⁵ The passage demonstrates that interpreting omens was a practice in which both the Byzantines and Lombards engaged.

The translation of Arabic scientific and occult texts into Latin, particularly during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, is well known.⁵⁶ Byzantium participated in this phenomenon indirectly, because many of the Arabic manuscripts transmitted to the Latin West had been translated from Byzantine Greek sources in the immediately preceding centuries. But Byzantium also contributed directly to the growth in Western European knowledge of the occult at this time through the translation into Latin of medieval Greek manuscripts. These included texts on the magical properties of animals, plants, and stones; manuals for dream interpretation; and treatises on astrology.⁵⁷ At least some of these manuscripts are known to have been translated in Constantinople and then exported to the West.⁵⁸ It has been suggested that the Western European interest in astronomy during the mid-twelfth century may have been an impetus for the defense of astrology endorsed by Manuel I, who both emulated Latin fashions and competed with Latin powers; he may have viewed the Western use of astral prognostication as a skill that demanded cultivation and legitimation in Byzantium as well.⁵⁹ The topic of Byzantine-Latin connections in the domain of magic is only now beginning to receive sustained attention and is a topic that requires further research.

The pursuit of occult knowledge as part of an education in ancient learning is attested for a number of middle Byzantine intellectuals. Michael Psellos (discussed in the previous section) and the learned twelfth-century imperial princess Anna Komnena (d. 1153/1154) wrote about having surveyed such literature.⁶⁰ However, the cautious and circuitous manner in which they and other middle Byzantine scholars refer to these undertakings points to the risk that engagement with unsanctioned intellectual domains could carry. Indeed, a student of Michael Psellos, John Italos (ca. 1025–1082), was put on trial in 1082 for offenses that included paganism, a charge that refers to his efforts at interweaving the study of ancient philosophy and Christian theology.⁶¹ It must be noted, however, that the percentage of the population capable of reading texts on philosophy and the occult sciences in the middle Byzantine era was extraordinarily small, and within the very limited group equipped to pursue the mastery of such erudite knowledge, it is possible that even fewer educated people would have risked this potentially unorthodox undertaking.⁶²

Michael Psellos is a particularly noteworthy figure in the study of the occult sciences because of the extensive preservation of his writings and the unusually detailed justifications he offers for his interest in ostensibly unorthodox learning.⁶³ Also of note is Psellos's terminology for the occult knowledge he explored, which includes vocabulary different from that usually applied to magic in Byzantium. As Paul Magdalino observes, Psellos employed words that emphasize the inaccessible, mysterious, and even dangerous nature of the specialized knowledge he has plumbed, including ἀπόκρυφος (“apocryphal,” but in the sense of the Latin equivalent, *occultus*), ἀπόρρητος (“forbidden” or “secret”), and ἄρρητος (“unspoken,” “unutterable,” or “inexplicable”).⁶⁴ He is known to have studied alchemy, astronomy, the magical attributes of stones, and the talismanic properties of statues. Furthermore, he wrote treatises on some of these topics. It must be emphasized, however, that Psellos does not represent the norm for middle Byzantine attitudes toward magic. He was a man of exceptional erudition with privileged access to some of the richest libraries in the medieval world and clearly possessed an intellectual drive that pushed him in directions few others followed. Even after factoring in the extent to which he introduced his students to unconventional fields of knowledge, it remains unclear whether he set in motion a broad-based revival of occult learning. Nor is it yet possible to determine if his articulation of the relationship between ancient philosophy and the occult sciences was widely understood or shared.⁶⁵

Among the fields of occult science that Psellos and others explored, the most significant arena for the continuation of ancient theories and practices

was astrology.⁶⁶ Although Byzantine sources sometimes differentiated astronomy as an objective science from astrology as the application of celestial observations for oracular interpretations, such distinction was not consistently applied. In particular, astronomy (ἄστρονομία) could include astrology (ἄστρολογία), and astronomy/astrology could encompass orthodox activities (such as determining the liturgical calendar or navigation), as well as unsanctioned practices (like prognostication). Furthermore, there was no strict terminological distinction for those who studied the stars, with *astronomos* (ἄστρονόμος), *astrologos* (ἄστρολόγος), and *mathematikos* (μαθηματικός) being used interchangeably.⁶⁷ Predictably, church officials condemned astral prognostication uncompromisingly, but the practice was actively pursued in imperial circles. Horoscopes were cast for some emperors, including Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (r. 945–949).⁶⁸ As noted in the previous section, Manuel I commissioned a defense of astrology justifying the consultation of the stars on the basis of their being part of the natural world created by God. Gathering knowledge that could be gained through them was therefore argued to be within the domain of Orthodox learning and practice.⁶⁹

The interpretation of dreams was another field that received extensive attention, as demonstrated by the significant corpus of manuscripts that preserve *oneirocritica* (ὄνειροκριτικά, or manuals for dream interpretation). The *oneirocritica* saw a surge in popularity during the middle Byzantine period and were consulted by people throughout Byzantine society.⁷⁰ The so-called provincial magnate Eustathius Boilas inventoried an *oneirocriticon* in his will of 1059, a record that indicates not only the ownership of such books but also the acceptability of their use.⁷¹ Some of these texts were the products of a shared Byzantine-Islamic tradition, with cross-cultural transmission and traces of the translation process evident in their content.⁷² Like astrology, dream interpretation was defended on the basis of divine sanction; it was claimed that God sent dreams as a means of guiding the recipient, although the Orthodox Church was not always in agreement with this claim and only recognized some prophetic dreams as legitimate.⁷³ The deep interest that prognostication of various kinds garnered at the Byzantine court and among the aristocracy is not surprising. The emperor and his circle often faced extremely demanding responsibilities and uncertain circumstances. They no doubt sought all means possible to maintain perspective on and control over the future, even if that effort took them to the shadowy depths of lecanomantic vessels and the dark voids encircling the stars.⁷⁴

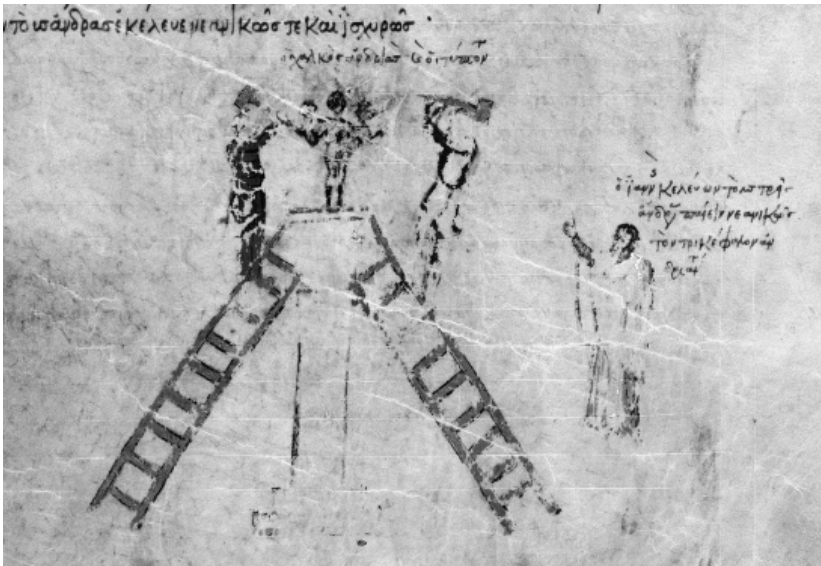


FIGURE 7.8. John the Grammarian performing *stoicheiosis* with a statue in the Hippodrome, *History of John Skylitzes*, Norman-Byzantine, twelfth century, Sicily, pigment on vellum, 35.5 x 27 cm. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid, vitr. 26–2, fol. 65r. © Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.

The Byzantines believed that pagan statuary, especially cult statues, could be inhabited by demons, and the ability to manipulate the supernatural power of these sculptures (their *stoicheion*, στοιχεῖον) was recognized as an occult skill with direct connections to pagan learning. Constantinople possessed a large number of ancient Greek and Roman statues that had been transported to the city shortly after its founding in the fourth century.⁷⁵ An eighth-century description of Constantinople and its monuments, the *Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai*, is replete with references to the magical properties of these sculptures.⁷⁶ *Stoicheiosis* is also one of the black arts that the ninth-century Iconoclast patriarch John the Grammarian is claimed to have practiced. The illustrated version of the chronicle of John Skylitzes depicts John orchestrating the disfigurement of a statue in order to predict and influence the demise of the emperor's foreign enemies (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, vitr. 26–2, fol. 65r) (Figure 7.8).⁷⁷ Like many domains of magic, belief in the supernatural powers of statuary and monumental apotropaioi was not unique to the Byzantine world. In particular, medieval Islamic sources demonstrate a

strong connection with Byzantine traditions in this field and offer intriguing opportunities for future cross-cultural study.⁷⁸

Although the lines between magic and religion were in some respects clearer in the more distinctly Christian culture of the middle Byzantine era than they had been in the transitional period of early Byzantine history, there was still ambiguity regarding the nature of supernatural powers. For instance, a common feature of numerous middle Byzantine churches is the use of animals (including those that show a distinct stylistic similarity to motifs in Islamic art) and/or pseudo-Arabic motifs in the decoration of the exteriors and interiors of these sacred spaces, especially at liminal junctures, including doors, windows, and the iconostasis (the barrier between the nave and the sanctuary of a church).⁷⁹ The use of natural and foreign motifs, which represent seemingly profane iconography, may at first appear incongruous in these holy buildings. Yet these emblems and the supernatural power they were thought to convey can be productively understood as essentially neutral in character; their potentially “magical” versus “sacred” status was generated not intrinsically but instead through the contexts of their use.⁸⁰ These powerful signs could be legitimized through their placement in holy buildings, where their supernatural power helped ward off evil and protect sanctified spaces.⁸¹ This final example emphasizes once again an essential aspect of magic in Byzantium: the meaning of the term was never fully fixed, varying over time and among different divisions of society, or even among individuals in a single place and time.

The Legacy of Medieval Byzantine Magic

In conclusion, a word should be said about the afterlife of medieval Byzantine magic. Conventional periodization ends the middle Byzantine era in 1204 with the Crusaders’ sacking of Constantinople, which remained in Western hands until it was reclaimed by the Byzantines in 1261. Late Byzantine (ca. 1261–1453) and early modern Greek magic show clear continuities and intriguing discontinuities with earlier traditions.⁸² A possible survival of middle Byzantine occult practices is found in a fifteenth-century Italo-Byzantine Greek manuscript attributed to a doctor, John of Aron. In one scene is illustrated a lecanomantic ritual (Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, ms. 3632, fol. 350v) (Figure 7.9), which shows the diviner seated on a chair and enclosed in a circle.⁸³ The image recalls the visual representations and textual descriptions of lecanomancy that appear with surprising frequency in middle Byzantine sources. On a more popular level, the continued use of



FIGURE 7.9. Detail of a scene showing a lecanomantic ritual, Dioscorides, *Materia medica*, Italo-Byzantine, 1440, Italy, pigment on vellum. BUB, Bologna, ms. 3632, fol. 350v. Su concessione della Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna.

amulets emblazoned with the evil eye and other apotropaic devices in the modern Greek world implies the long endurance of such popular beliefs and practices, although the exact nature of the diachronic relationships between medieval and modern Greek magic awaits further investigation.⁸⁴ Beyond this internal legacy, Byzantine magic also made important contributions to the Western European medieval and early modern occult sciences; Ottoman and Persian traditions of popular and learned magic, especially astrology and dream interpretation; and medieval and modern Slavic – particularly Russian – magical practices, including the use of amulets, spells, and dream interpretation.⁸⁵

Notes

1. See esp. select essays in Maguire, ed., *Byzantine Magic*; Magdalino and Mavroudi, eds., *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*; Petropoulos, ed., *Greek Magic: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*; the abstracts for a recent conference session moderated by Spieser, “Magie, croyance, superstition,” vol. 2, 197–202; the sources in n. 3.

2. Jeffreys, Haldon, and Cormack, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*; James, ed., *A Companion to Byzantium*; Stephenson, ed., *The Byzantine World*. Several entries of relevance to magic are found in Kazhdan, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, cf. “amulet,” “astrology,” “Chnoubis,” “divination,” “engastrimythos,” “evil eye,” “Hermes Trismegistos,” “Holy Rider,” “horoscope,” “incantation,” “magic,” “magician,” “Oneirokritika,” “oracles,” “popular religion,” “ring signs.”
3. Magic has been an increasingly common theme in publications on Byzantine material and visual culture since the late 1980s. See, for example, Maguire, Maguire, and Duncan-Flowers, *Art and Holy Powers in the Early Christian House*; Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets,” 25–62; Russell, “The Archaeological Context of Magic,” 35–50; Maguire, “Magic and Money in the Early Middle Ages,” 1037–1054; Maguire, “Feathers Signify Power,” 383–398; Heintz, “Health: Magic, Medicine, and Prayer,” 275–281; Peers, “Magic, the Mandyliion, and the Letter of Abgar,” 163–174; Walker, “Meaningful Mingling,” 32–53; Ryder, “Popular Religion.”
4. For an overview of Byzantine secular and canon laws relating to magic, see Troianos, “Zauberei und Giftmischerei in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit,” 37–51.
5. Fögen, “Legislation und Kodifikation des Kaisers Leon VI,” 27.
6. Magdalino, “Occult Science and Imperial Power,” 158.
7. Magdalino, “The Byzantine Reception of Classical Astrology,” 35–57, esp. 44–45, 50.
8. Fögen, “Balsamon on Magic,” 100–102. See also Magdalino, “Occult Science and Imperial Power,” 158–160.
9. Regarding the use of magical charms recounted in middle Byzantine saints’ lives, see Abrahamse, “Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period,” 12–13.
10. Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets,” 25–62.
11. For examples of early Byzantine medico-magical and other apotropaic devices, see Vikan, “Art, Medicine, and Magic in Early Byzantium,” 65–86; Russell, “Byzantine *Instrumenta Domestica* from Anemurium,” 133–163.
12. Spier, “Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets,” 50–51. Regarding the spike in Byzantine interest in pagan learning, including categories of magical and occult knowledge, during the tenth century, see Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin*; Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*, esp. 175–186.
13. Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, ed. Bekker, 348–351; Karlin-Hayter, *Vita Euthymii*, 4–5 (ll. 28–32), 8–9 (ll. 6–14).
14. Nicetas Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*, trans. Magoulias, 84–85.
15. Fögen, “Balsamon on Magic,” 108–110.
16. *Ibid.*, 109–110.
17. *Ibid.*, 108.

18. See, for example, the stories recounted in middle Byzantine saints' lives of the false holy men Bigrinos and Gourias, who deceived the faithful into participating in demonic rituals, with predictably unfortunate results. Abrahamse, "Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period," 10–12.
19. Maguire, "Other Icons," 9–20.
20. As discussed in Maguire, "Garments Pleasing to God," 215–224.
21. Maguire, "Magic and the Christian Image," esp. 66–71.
22. Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, cf. "magic" and "magician."
23. Regarding John the Grammarian's possible engagement with unorthodox learning and his negative reputation in Iconophile literature, see Magdalino, *L'orthodoxie des astrologues*, 58–69; Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power," 122–124, 128, 135–137.
24. John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, trans. Wortley, 86–87 (ch. 5, 3–4 [85–86]).
25. John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, 74 (ch. 4, 21 [72]); Grabar and Manoussacas, *L'illustration du manuscrit de Skylitzès*, 47, no. 140, fig. 61; Tsamakda, *The Illustrated Chronicle of Ioannes Skylitzes*, 101, fig. 139.
26. Walker, "Meaningful Mingling," 32–53.
27. Magdalino, "The Byzantine Reception of Classical Astrology," 36–48, esp. 39–40.
28. Regarding the recognition of magic as a dynamically cross-cultural, diachronic phenomenon, see Mavroudi, "Occult Science and Society in Byzantium," 39–95.
29. Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power," 120–122.
30. Nicetas Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*, for Basilakes: 246–247; for Skleros Seth: 84–85, 187.
31. Constantine VII, *Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions*, trans. Haldon, 106–107 ([C] l. 199), with commentary at 211.
32. Costanza, "La palmomanzia e tecniche affini in età bizantina," 95–111; Costanza, "Nitriti come segni profetici," 1–24.
33. Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*, 82–84. Greenfield, "Sorcery and Politics at the Byzantine Court," 73–93; Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power," 127–128, 148–149.
34. Trojanos, "Magic and the Devil," 48.
35. Abrahamse, "Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period," 3–17; Maguire, "From the Evil Eye to the Eye of Justice," 217–239; Calofonos, "The Magician Vigrinos and His Victim," 64–71.
36. Magdalino, "Introduction," in *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, ed. Magdalino and Mavroudi, 14.
37. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium*, 141–144, fig. 33; Maguire, "Magic and Sorcery in Ninth-Century Manuscript Illumination," 199.

38. Regarding the iconography of demons in middle and late Byzantine art, see Greenfield, "Fallen into Outer Darkness," 61–80.
39. The exception that proves the rule is found in the tenth-century vita of Basil the Younger, which recounts the saint's own encounter with a female seductress who had inherited supernatural powers from her mother and was able to harm those who resisted her advances. Abrahamse, "Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period," 15–16.
40. Abrahamse, "Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period," 15–16; Kazhdan, "Byzantine Hagiography and Sex," 140–142.
41. John Skylitzes, *John Skylitzes. A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, 86–87 (ch. 5, 3 [85–86]).
42. Fögen, "Balsamon on Magic," 105–109.
43. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 281–284, 300–303.
44. Psellos, Michel. *Chronographie, ou, Histoire d'un siècle de Byzance (976–1077)*. Edited and translated by Émile Renauld. 2 vols. Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles lettres," 1926–1928. Also see Mavroudi, "Female Practitioners of Magic," 200.
45. Mavroudi, "Female Practitioners of Magic," 200; Heintz, "Health: Magic, Medicine, and Prayer," 275–281.
46. Patera, "Gylou, démon et sorcière du monde byzantin," 311–327.
47. Michel Psellos, *Chronographie*, I.34–I.35 (book 3, para. 5).
48. Mavroudi, "Female Practitioners of Magic," 200. For possible connections between popular medicine practiced in the medieval and modern Greek worlds, see Clark, *A Cretan Healer's Handbook in the Byzantine Tradition*.
49. For the most recent studies on these branches of magical knowledge in Byzantium, see the essays gathered in Magdalino and Mavroudi, eds., *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, which also cite the important earlier bibliography on these topics.
50. On this point, see Duffy, "Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals," 83–90; Magdalino, "Introduction," 16, 19–20, 27–29.
51. Magdalino and Mavroudi, *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, 11–13, 18, esp. 20–21, 27–28; Ierodiakonou, "The Greek Concept of Sympatheia," 97–118.
52. For a summary of accusations and insinuations of occult practices made by Psellos against members of the imperial court, see Kaldellis, *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia*, 109–115.
53. Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*; Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation*; Magdalino, "Introduction," 32–35.
54. See esp. Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation*.
55. Liudprand of Cremona, *The Complete Works*, trans. Squatriti, 262–265.
56. For instance, see Pingree, "The Diffusion of Arabic Magical Texts," 57–102.
57. Burnett, "Late Antique and Medieval Latin Translations of Greek Texts," 325–359, esp. 329–331, 334–341.
58. *Ibid.* 329–330.

59. Magdalino, "The Byzantine Reception of Classical Astrology," 44; Magdalino, "The Porphyrogenita and the Astrologers," 30–31.
60. Magdalino, "Introduction," 16–17, 27; Magdalino, "The Porphyrogenita and the Astrologers."
61. Clucas, *The Trial of John Italos*.
62. Regarding the low percentage of the Byzantine population educated at this high level, see Browning, "Literacy in the Byzantine World," 39–54, esp. 40.
63. On Psellos and his interests in the occult, see Magdalino, "Introduction," 15–21, 28–35, which summarizes the earlier bibliography.
64. *Ibid.*, 15–19.
65. Duffy, "Hellenic Philosophy in Byzantium," 139–156.
66. See esp. Magdalino, *L'orthodoxie des astrologues*; and the relevant essays in Magdalino and Mavroudi, eds., *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*.
67. Regarding these terms and their use in Byzantine sources, see Magdalino, "The Byzantine Reception of Classical Astrology," esp. 34–37.
68. Pingree, "The Horoscope of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus," 219–231. Regarding horoscopes cast on the occasion of imperial coronations in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see Pingree, "Gregory Chioniates and Palaeologan Astronomy," 138–139, esp. 138 n. 29.
69. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 377–379*; Magdalino, *L'orthodoxie des astrologues*, 109–132.
70. Oberhelman, *Dreambooks in Byzantium*, 55–58.
71. Vryonis, "The Will of a Provincial Magnate, Eustathius Boilas (1059)," 269.
72. Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation*.
73. Oberhelman, *Dreambooks in Byzantium*, 23–24, 47–55.
74. Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power," 119–162.
75. Mango, "Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder," 55–75; James, "'Pray Not to Fall into Temptation and Be on Your Guard,'" 12–20.
76. Cameron and Herrin, eds., *Constantinople in the Eighth Century*; Simeonova, "Magic and the Warding-Off of Barbarians in Constantinople," 207–210, with earlier bibliography.
77. John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, 86–87 (ch. 5, 3 [85–86]); Tsamakda, *The Illustrated Chronicle of Ioannes Skylitzes*, 109, fig. 160.
78. For work in this direction, see Flood, "Image against Nature," 143–166.
79. For discussion of these decorations, see Walker, "Islamicizing Motifs in Byzantine Churches."
80. Maguire and Maguire, "Animals and Magic in Byzantine Art," 58–96.
81. On this point, see Maguire, "The Cage of Crosses," 169–172.
82. See Cupane, "La magia a Bisanzio nel secolo XIV," 237–262; Clark, *A Cretan Healer's Handbook in the Byzantine Tradition*; Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology*; Stewart, *Demons and the Devil*; Greenfield, "A Contribution to the Study of Palaeologan Magic," 117–154; Magdalino,

- "Introduction," 21–26; Tselikas, "Spells and Exorcisms in Three Post-Byzantine Manuscripts," 72–81.
83. Maguire, "Feathers Signify Power," 384–385.
 84. For example, see Herzfeld, "Meaning and Morality," 560–574; Veikou, "Ritual Word and Symbolic Movement," 95–105; Chrysanthopoulou, "The Evil Eye among the Greeks of Australia" 106–118.
 85. Regarding the late and post-Byzantine contributions to Western European and Islamic traditions of magic, see Saliba, "Revisiting the Astronomical Contacts," 362–373; Mavroudi, "Exchanges with Arabic Writers," 62–75; Farhad, ed., *Falnama: The Book of Omens*. On Slavic magic and its roots in the Byzantine occult traditions, see Ševčenko, "Remarks on the Diffusion of Byzantine Scientific and Pseudo-Scientific Literature," 321–345; Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets," 44–51; Ryan, "Magic and Divination," 35–58; Ryan, *The Bathhouse at Midnight*.